

December 17, 1954

Mr. W. H. Freeman
549 Market Street
San Francisco 5, Calif.

Dear Bill:

Thank you for your letter of the 8th. I hope that Dr. Cavalli found occasion to meet you while he was at Berkeley last week, as I suggested he do, but I heard elsewhere that he had a flu attack that cramped his schedule.

I hope I don't wear your patience by my questions. As you must have guessed, you were the first publisher I thought of for this book, and I would look forward to working with you on it. But I am in the dilemma now of having firm offers from at least four houses, and want to find what tangible justification I can for accepting one as against the other three. I hope it will not occur to you to simply my problem by withdrawing your interest. I also have to consider that I am acting not only for myself but also as Luca's agent. I don't think I can put off the decision too long, in view of the competing interests.

Ordinarily, I would not presume to inquire about the publisher's business: the contract give him the widest latitude in styling, price, promotion, etc. But the present situation seems to introduce an element of choice whether I like it or not; by choosing one publisher versus another, the outcome of the book will be directly influenced. So, it would help me greatly if I had some notion of your concept of this book. I don't mean to press you for many details, but you had implied yourself that you had some innovations in mind. The alternatives now pending would be 1) a "standard" volume by our own University Press, or one of the large commercial houses, 2) a listing in the Methuen series, on biological subjects (compare Albert's, Selective Toxicity).

Unfortunately, I will not be at the Federation meetings in the Spring, and will have to miss that chance to see you personally. Without writing a book yourself, you can tell me what I want to know in terms of the following questions:

- 1) Do you contemplate any radical departure in format or binding? [The Methuen, for example, has successfully economized with a pocket-sized page].
- 2) Can this be gotten out for \$3 retail? Or less? [Assume under 5x32 pages, no extraordinary costs]
- 3) Will this be part of a series of monographs? Would it be named as a series?

Anything you tell me will be treated confidentially, as indicated, and of course I am not asking for a binding commitment, but your current thinking on the matter.

Yours sincerely,


Joshua Lederberg